C+VG MEGA BOOK '90

WE PREVIEW THE CHRISTMAS CHARTBUSTERS!

HIGHSCORES

GAME	DATE	SCORE

WELCOME WELCOME WELCOME

... To the C+VG Mega Games Preview Book! We reckon that the games previewed here are going to be THE runaway Christmas hits of 1990! All you have to do is collect the screenshot stickers that come with the October and November issues of C+VG and stick them in the numbered holes to make your booklet complete.

As well as this adhesive excitement, we've provided a haven for your high scores on the inside back cover. Say goodbye to recording your gaming achievements on the back of crisp packets, because our patent tabular grid system is easy to use and fairly environment-friendly.

And let's not forget our fabulous Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles compo, run in conjunction with Mirrorsoft! Turn to page 16 NOW and find out how to win the fabulous Konami coin-op!

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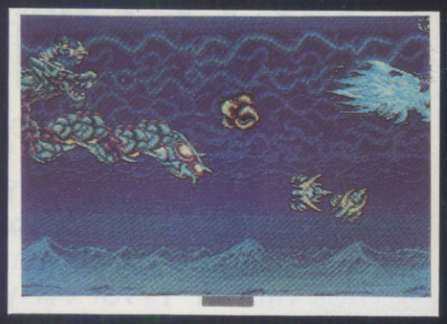
DRAGON BREED

BY ACTIVISION



Another of Activision's licences lined up for Christmas release is Irem's wicked blast 'em up, Dragon Breed. It's a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up with one important aspect - the player controls two characters at once!

As the young king Kayus, rider of the Dragon of Light, Bahamoot (?), you must traverse the kingdom, to dish out explosive annihilation to the forces of darkness that dare to conquer the lands. By collecting power-ups, the dragon's abilities are altered, and the end result is absolutely awesome firepower. Like that other top Irem blast, R-Type, you have a beam weapon that can be charged up to unleash an energy bolt of devastating proportions! Cor!

The young rider has to be protected at all costs, as one hit to him means instant doom. This can be achieved by wrapping the dragon's tail around it's body, creating a shield to protect Kayus in tricky situations. The dragon's body also deflects enemy missiles, so it can be used as a block when nasties flying below you start giving you hassle.

At certain points the rider has to dismount, and continue on foot, armed only with a natty little pulse rifle. The dragon will hover nearby, so if things look bleak, you can always hop back on, and deal out some damage.

The computer versions are being taken care of by Arc, the team behind US Gold's gobsmacking Forgotten Worlds and Crackdown conversions. Another scrolling shoot 'em up should cause the Arc team no problems, and from what we've seen of the 16 bit versions, Dragon Breed should be very good indeed on the ST and Amiga, and it's a distinct possibility that the 8-bit versions should be just as cracking. For the full lowdown, keep reading C+VG for the first and best review, coming to you in the next few months.

R-TYPE II

BY ACTIVISION

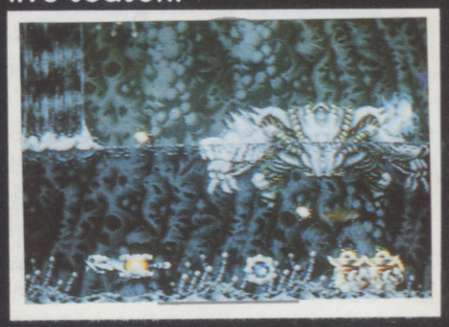
It's mechanical! It's biological! It's back! The successor to Irem's mega-hit arcade blockbuster (how many cliches can we reel off, I wonder) was no less successful when it was released to the not-so-unsuspecting public earlier on this year. Generally speaking the sequel was more of the same brand of horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up action - eight more levels of letting the Bydo Empire eat photons with a variety of extra bolt-on goodies.

You start the game with the bog-standard R9 fighter, but with plenty of super-dooper, bolt-on weaponry in the offing for R9 pilots who really want to get the job done. There are missiles, shield pods and a wide variety of beam weapons to collect, all of which make baddie-blasting that much easier and fun.

It's a long route to the heart of the Bydo Empire and it takes the intrepid R9 pilot through all sorts of alien obstacles, and there are even natural hazards in store. It's a good job the R9 is waterproof for starters, as one of the levels is entirely subaquatic!

As in the original, the ghastly end-of-level guardians are the true show-stoppers. We may have been disgusted by the pulsating hearts and all the other bio-mechanical terrors in the original, but R-Type 2 takes these and increases their size, violence potential, and general ugliness two-fold!

Activision did a pretty good job of the R-Type conversions a couple of years back (and Game Boy owners should watch out for a conversion coming soon for their machine), so we wait with baited breath for the Christmas release of R-Type 2. It will be interesting to see how it compares with another one of Activision's Christmas biggies, Dragon Breed (featured across the page), which by a strange coincidence is another Irem coin-op. The games bear more than a passing resemblance in the scrolling shoot 'em up stakes, so keep your eyes glued to the pages of C+VG to check out the top blasters of the festive season!



SCI

BY OCEAN

Move over Crockett and Tubbs, Ray and Tony are taking over! These two were the stars of Chase HQ, the brill Taito coin-op and Ocean's big conversion of 1989, and now they're burning up the road once again for more highway hi-jinx in Ocean's conversions of the excellent coin-op sequel, Special Criminal Investigations.

After putting the five original roadhogs behind bars, the two super-smooth pedal pushers have been promoted to SCI, the pinnacle of the CHASE department. Their stylish black armoured Porsche has been traded in for a sleek red convertible, and now instead of just ramming the bad guys off the road, one of the guys can lean out of the car, and blast the offending vehicle into smithereens with a bazooka! Is this perfect traffic control, or what?

Chase HQ was a top-notch conversion on the 16-bit machines, and the Spectrum and Amstrad versions were out of this world. The only let-down was the C64 version (which was, to say the least, awful), but this time round Ocean have recruited the teams be-

hind US Gold's conversions of Turbo OutRun - Probe Software and ICE - to do the business, with Probe handling the C64 game, and ICE dealing with the others.

There's no news of any console conversions as yet, but considering Chase HQ is already on the Sega Master System and PC Engine, there's a good chance that versions of SCI for these two machines are on the horizon. And with Ocean backing Amstrad's new GX4000 and the Nintendo, there's a distinct possibility that you'll soon be able to play SCI on those machines too.

From what we've seen so far of the computer versions, things are looking pretty close to the coin-op, especially on the Amiga. If the speed and playability can be kept up to scratch, Ocean should have a real winner on their hands for Christmas.

ROBOCOP 2

BY OCEAN

Probably the most eagerly-awaited computer sequel for years is RoboCop 2, and Ocean, who produced the record-breaking original, have grabbed the licence to the Orion movie which has already earned vast amounts of dollars in The States.

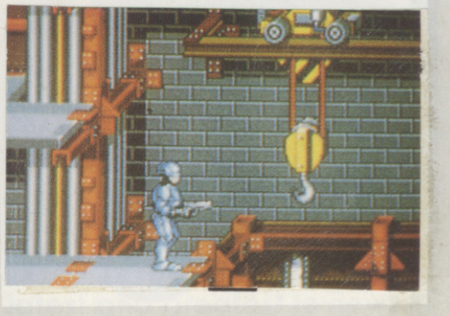
As in the original, the film centres around the adventures of the cyborg bobby, and his flesh-and-blood partner Anne Lewis. This time around they've got to deal with a new problem in Old Detroit - an addictive designer drug called Nuke. Thing is, the police force is out on strike, (yeah, again - militant bunch aren't they?) so Robo and Lewis are left on their own.

As if that wasn't bad enough the titanium-coated copper is having an identity crisis (is he man or machine?), and he's also worried about being replaced by a newer model, RoboCop II, a nightmare machine with a psychotic human brain.

Liverpudlian programming house Special FX (programmers of Batman - The Caped Crusader, Untouchables and most recently, Midnight Resistance) are currently getting the game ready for it's November all formats release. The action follows that of the film closely, and is set over eight levels - four scrolling side-view sections linked together with puzzles and target practice rounds. Throughout, Robo has to deal with crazed drug dealers, ED-209s (yep, they're still around) and finally, Robocop 2, but he does it all in his usual amiable style - shoot first, ask questions later.

The Amiga version (shown here) looks terrific, and the big, colourful sprites and highly-detailed backdrops really make the game leap out, grab you by the throat, then shake you about a bit. If the other versions are just as good, this will undoubtedly be as big as its predecessor.

And with console versions in the works too, (check out the extensive preview in October's C+VG for more info), "big" hardly sums up the enormity of it all, and we have to venture into the realms of imaginary words like "gigantorama" and "hugenormous". Phew!

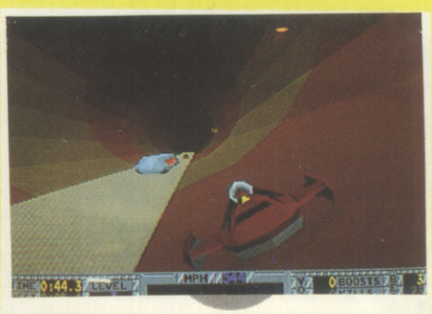


STUN RUNNER

BY DOMARK

A 990 mph trip along a race track of the future was the experience this Atari coin-op offered when it was launched late in 1989. Atari had already attracted the arcade-going public's attention with two superb race games, Hard Drivin' and Winning Run, both of which used a piece of custom-designed technology ("The Polygonizer") to produce very realistic 3D graphics never before seen on a coin-op. STUN Runner was the third machine to use this graphics hardware, but the speed was pepped up to make driving STUN Runner's laser-armed hover car like riding a bullet through a rifle barrel!

The object of the game is simple - just get to the other end of the track before time runs out. But the tracks are full of other racers, who would be happy to see your car blown into a million bits, or at least disqualified from the race.



Luckily, you're armed with two weapons, the afore-mentioned laser cannon, and, if you can ride over 20 bonus stars, a Shockwave, which travels along the road and the walls of the tunnel destroying everything in sight.

There is no accelerator or brake to worry about - the hover car automatically accelerates to maximum speed, and you just have to steer. Acceleration pads line the roads, which briefly boost your speed to the maximum 990 mph when you run over them.

STUN Runner wasn't an enormous hit in the arcades, probably because it wasn't too difficult to complete the game's 30-odd levels. However, playing it is a remarkable and exhilarating experience, being not unlike playing Road Blasters on a roller coaster.

Domark, who score a considerable success with their conversions of Hard Drivin' (the first Polygonizer game), snapped up the STUN Runner licence almost as soon as the game hit the arcades, and they plan to have it out in the shops for Christmas 1990. How will the programmers fair in getting all those superfast vectors on ST, Amiga, Spectrum, C64 and Amstrad screens? Keep watching C+VG and find out.

SPEEDBALL II

BY MIRRORSOFT

It's Sequels City this Christmas, what with R-Type 2, Chase HQ 2, Super Mario 3, and what could prove to be one the greatest of them all - Speedball 2. Who could forget the original? Best described as Rollerball without the rolling, Speedball cleaned up on the C64, ST and Amiga with its extremely violent depiction of the ultimate future sport.

Players no longer bother with girly shin-pads and helmets. In the future it's full armour, metal spikes - the whole bit. Good sportsmanship is about as popular as a knee in the groin. If the goalkeeper's saving all your shots, a studded gauntlet in the chops will reduce his enthusiasm.

Referees have only a token presence. They have control over the length of the match and are responsible for handing in the final scores to the Speedball officials - but even they're not invulnerable to a spot of bribery and corruption!

Speedball 2 incorporates all this and more. The visuals have been completely redesigned and look even more sexy than before, and the whole atmosphere has

changed from the harsh metallic feeling to a brooding, gothic look.

The game's designers (the famed Bitmap Brothers) also intend to include a managerial aspect as well. Individual players can be sold and bought and there's loads of additions to the tactical part of the game. There are also plenty of new weapons and icons dotted around the pitch, all of which have a devastating effect on either you or your opponent.

Even the pitch has been refurbished and now an ultra-swish eight-way scrolling pitch replaces the crumbly old vertically scrolling playing area.

The end of this year could well turn out to be the season of the future sport. Speedball 2 looks rather awesome, and there's also the promise of the original Speedball being converted across to the Sega Master System, and, possibly the Nintendo too, so make sure you stay with us for the latest and greatest reviews.

GOLDEN AXE

BY VIRGIN

The dreaded Death Adder has taken over the land butchering all in his path, leaving his own foul minions in their place. The land needs a hero and fortunately there are three waiting in the wings, namely Axe Battler (a barbarian), Tyris Flare (an Amazon and Gilius Thunderhead (a dwarf).

All three rebels are accomplished warriors and are capable of a whole skipful of sword slashing and shoulder charging moves. The game also has a mystical slant to complement the beat 'em up action, and each warrior is skilled in a particular type of magic which can be used, smart bomb-fashion, to destroy everything on screen with lightning strikes, fire storms or earthquakes.

Along the path to the final confrontation with Death Adder there are plenty of enemy minions to accost, from lethal skeletons and barbarian women to deadly, hammer-wielding giants. Some even attack astride fire-breathing dragonlets, but if you can dismount the rider YOU can take the reins!

One of Golden Axe's greatest assets in the arcade was the sheer variety involved. There are loads of foes to beat up, and although the arcade machine only had six levels, they were certainly challenging enough to keep you pumping the machine full of silver!

The burning question is, can Virgin transfer all this beat 'em up mayhem onto our trusty 8 and 16 bit screens? If you've followed C+VG over the last few months, you would have seen the Sega Master System and Megadrive versions of Golden Axe more than make the grade with their remarkable similarity to the coin-op. The Megadrive version in particular knocked us down with its exquisite sprites and spot-on backdrops. The icing on the already substantial cake was the simultaneous two player mode - bundles of laughs guaranteed!

The programmers landed with the unenviable task of converting Golden Axe are due to finish their efforts in time for Christmas, so make sure you keep your eyes out for the C+VG review coming soon!

SUPER MONACO GP

BY SEGA

Arcadesters all around the globe were totally blown away with Sega's last Formula One game - Super Monaco GP. The unbeaten 3D system (much tweaked and reprogrammed since the days of Space Harrier) has allowed Sega to score a whole armful of arcade hits including the legendary Outrun and Afterburner. But by far the most impressive recent offering was Super Monaco GP.

If you've got some sort of allergy to arcade machines, you've been missing out on some very realistic Formula One action, enhanced even further with a truly vicious hydraulic chair! It takes a while to grow accustomed to the arcade game's controls, but there are plenty of options (like an automatic gearbox) to make the game more accessible.

The general aim is simplicity itself. Just keep on qualifying for extra time by beating the strict time limits and reaching the checkpoints dotted around the Monaco race track. It's not just the other drivers you're up against in some races - the threat of worsening weather conditions is also your constant enemy.

It came as a bit of a disappointment to find that the Sega Master System version of Super Monaco GP bore little resemblance to the superb arcade original, looking for all the world like that ageing C64 classic Pitstop 2! However, that's not to say that the game itself is a complete disaster - far from it! The visuals are fine, but it was the head-to-head racing action that earned this corking cart an overall mark of 92% in September's C+VG.

A Megadrive version (which has been receiving good reviews in the Japanese press) is also on the way, so no doubt the game will go straight to number one in the C+VG Megadrive chart when it blazes its way onto the shelves in the Autumn. Will anyone be converting Super Monaco to the home computers? Very probably - we'll be letting you know who and when in the news pages of C+VG.

SUPER MARIO III

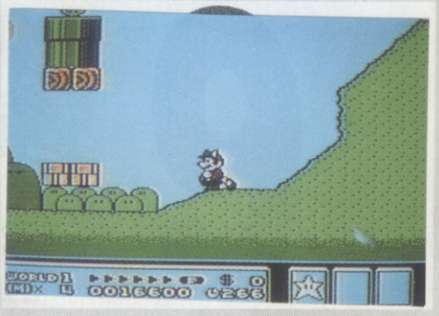
BY NINTENDO

It's a foregone conclusion that any game that features Mario has to be a world-beating success. All the way back to the days of Donkey Kong, to Mario Bros, and then Super Mario I and II, this single character has sold more games around the world than any other.

And if you thought the other two Super Mario adventures were brill beyond belief, you may be surprised to hear that Super Mario Bros III wipes the floor with its predecessors. So far in the States and Japan, SM3 has been the biggest-selling game for a long time, and is the biggest, prettiest Mario game so far, and one of the most playable games ever!

Like parts one and two, Mario has to save the Mushroom Worlds from Bowser, King of the Koopas, and his seven koopalings. To do this he must jump his way around the eight platform filled worlds, avoiding almost sixty different types of baddie along the way. This may seem almost impossible, but Mario has got stacks of new tricks up his sleeve.

As well as eating mush-

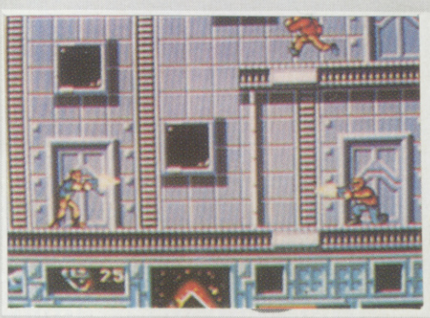


rooms to become Super Mario, or picking flowers to throw fireballs, now our hero has a whole range of power suits that give him amazing new abilities! Mario can become a flying raccoon, a frog, an indestructible statue (?), or even Hammer Mario, who has a fireproof suit!

There's just so much to Super Mario 3, it'll take yonks to complete it. Even if you do, there's a big chance there's lots of things you haven't seen! There are loads of secret rooms and coin-filled screens, as well as sub-games that can be played to build up the number of lives.

There's no way the sheer playability of SM3 can be shown with a mere screenshot, but you can find out for yourself how addictive it is around Christmas time. But you'll have to be quick, because this is one game that's going to sell fast!

TOTAL RECALL



BY OCEAN

A is for Arnie and A is for Action, and there's no doubt that one of Ocean's hottest licences of the year (yes ANOTHER one!) has both in copious quantities!

In the movie, Schwarzenegger stars as Quaid - a mean, muscle-bound construction worker of the 21st - haunted by recurring dreams of a different life on the planet Mars. His idyllic life of wealth and comfort is soon to be shattered by a visit to Rekcall Ltd, a company that can literally make your dreams come true! The only problem is, Quaid's dreams set off a previously suppressed alter-ego, and he soon finds himself a hunted man... There's loads of surprises and plenty of violence in store for Quaid as he makes his way to the one place that can solve all his mysteries - Mars.

It all sounds like great fodder for a gob-smacking arcade game, and it looks like Ocean aren't about to let us down. They've set programming bods Active Minds (who've had dozens of arcade hits in the past) on the job and they're all set to hand in a thrilled-packed platform game, with healthy dollops of shoot 'em up action added in for good measure. It's best described as a sort of ESWAT/Robocop type of game, with the prospect of a few platform-based tactical elements making their way into the final design.

Versions are set to appear for the usual gang of five - Amiga, ST, Spectrum, Amstrad and C64 with a release date of around October time. NES owners needn't fret either. A different bundle of platform frolics is currently being cooked up by Acclaim in the States, and there's no doubt that this will eventually make the leap across the Atlantic to our hallowed shores.

Here at C+VG, we're waiting in great anticipation for the finished versions of Total Recall - so make sure you keep up with us over the following months when we'll be giving you the definitive spiel.

ESWAT

BY US GOLD

Decent people don't live in the city any more. Several ruthless, crazed crime bosses have clubbed together in order to bring a new wave of terror and destruction to the land. The forces of evil control the city now and the police are powerless. It's about time a hero came along to save the day and with this game, you could be that hero!

This eight-way scrolling blaster has already left a blazing trail in its wake through arcades all over the country, so it came as no real surprise to discover that US Gold have snapped up the red-hot licensing rights.

Basically, your aim is to make your way through the crime-ridden city, blasting all and sundry with a variety of devastating weaponry while jumping around platforms and clambering over buildings.

If you complete a couple of levels as an ordinary copper, you're promoted into the ESWAT (Enhanced Special Weapons And Tactics) squad, and you're given a cybernetic exo-suit equipped with the latest firepower guaranteed to make even the most hardened punk dribble in terror! Trade in your pathetic pistol for duo-laser cannons (yeah!), and don armour so tough, it makes Robocop's titanium look like Bacofoil! You're going to need every single shooter you get your hands and there are flame throwers and rocket launchers lying about all over the place.

We've already seen conversions for both Sega consoles, and while the Master System version was ok, the Megadrive conversion is tremendous - terrific sprites, gob-smacking soundtracks, and devastating blasty gameplay!

Can licence holders US Gold possibly recreate the huge variety of backdrops and sprites and still pack in the hair-tearingly addictive gameplay? Let's keep our fingers crossed because versions are due on the Spectrum, C64, Amstrad, ST and Amiga around Christmas time.

LINE OF FIRE

US GOLD

Taito did it not once, but twice with Operations Wolf and Thunderbolt. Since then we've seen plenty of clones with the likes of Beast Busters and Mechanized Attack, but one of the best of them all was Sega's Line of Fire - characterised by the huge guns attached to the sit-down arcade cabinet.

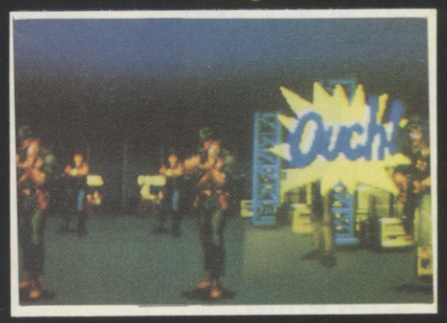
The actual gameplay was not really that different from Operation Wolf, the aim being to drive over enemy territory in your Jeep shooting everything that moved, along with anything vaguely suspicious-looking that didn't. One of the real downers with Taito's Operation series was the limit to the player's ammunition. Firearms freaks will no doubt be extremely chuffed to hear that there is no such limitation in this Sega coin-op - a blaster's dream come true!

There were plenty of extremely nasty levels in the arcade original just to make up for the unlimited bullets at your disposal. The enemy themselves are willing to chuck just about anything that carries a gun at you, so look out for the bog-standard infantry (cannon fodder) along with the rather tougher armoured vehicles! And there's a squadron of helicopters out to get you whenever your trusty jeep drives over open ground, so make sure your trigger finger is well and truly ready for this one!

Sega also planted a whole military division in this game specially designated to protect the end of every level. Watch out for the likes of enemy fighter-bomber planes, getting their kicks by dropping a huge barrage of bombs on your almost defenceless jeep!

If this is all beginning to sound like an impossible task, take heart. Just like Operation Thunderbolt, two players can participate in the carnage, with each gun having a convenient grenade launcher attached - mega-devastation with a single button!

Creative Materials (who brought you Rotox) are doing the programming on this all formats release, which is also scheduled to be on the shelves this Christmas. Watch out for it, and the imminent review in the pages of C+VG!



WIN A TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES COIN-OP

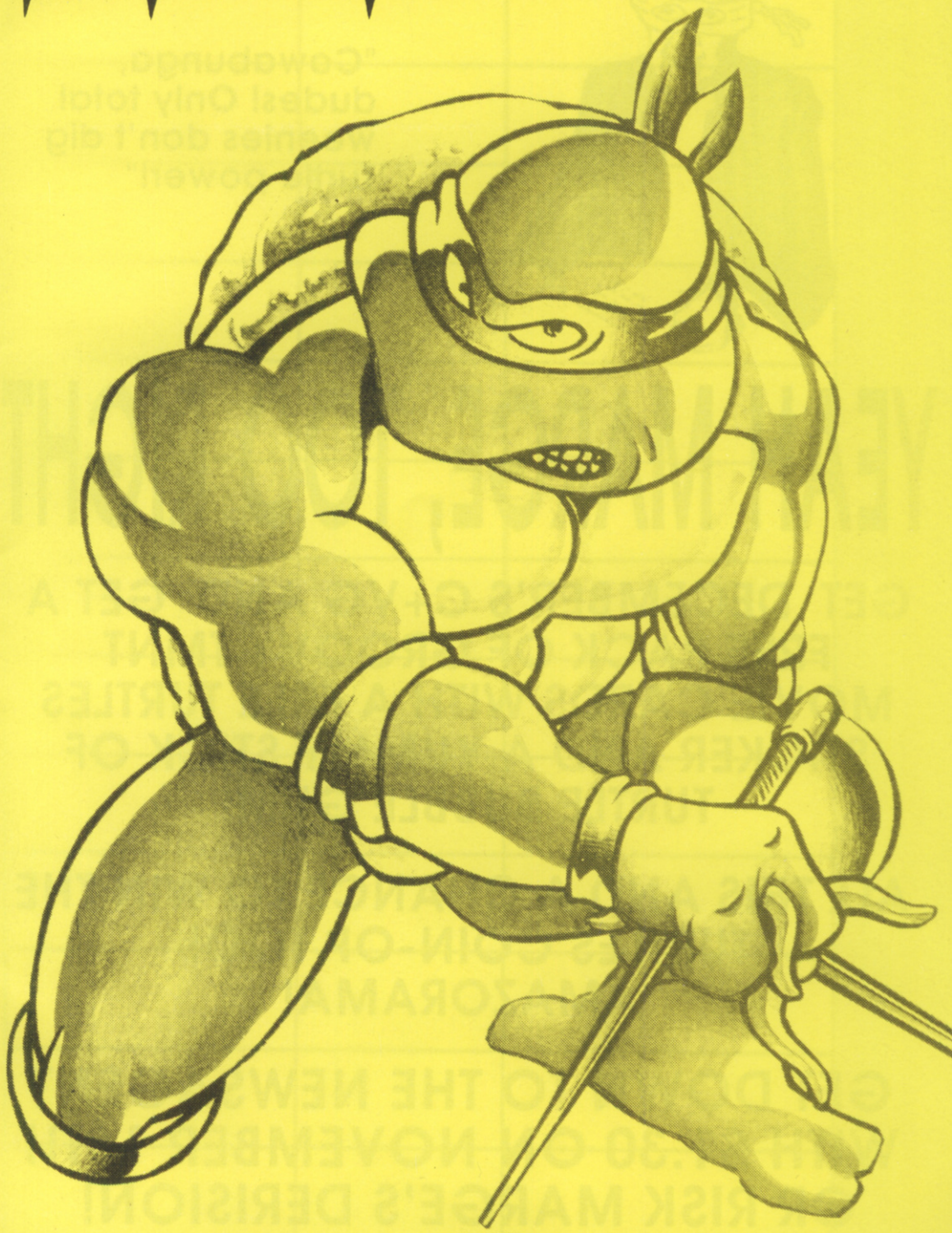
COURTESY OF IMAGEWORKS COWABUNGA! Have we gone turtley mad, or what?

Yes, folks, it's gonna be a Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles Christmas! With the official Turtles computer game coming out on the Imageworks label, as well as the UK release of the totally brilliant movie, C+VG, in conjunction with those fabbo Imageworks dudes and dudettes, are giving away an honest-to-goodness Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles coin-op!

Just think - your very own Turtles coin-op to play again and again, and all for free! Make everyone else green with envy and be, like, totally outrageous, dude! But before you start screaming and whirling your katanas (sounds painful), calm down and read how you can enter.

Check the sticker sheets fixed to the cover of the October and November issues of Computer and Video Games, because on there somewhere there'll be a special Turtles Token sticker. You can peel 'em off and stick them on your goldfish if you like, but the smart cookies will be keeping them sticky until November 16th. That's when the super, totally gnarly December Turtlemania issue will be "hitting the streets".

Inside that issue will be the full details on exactly how you can make this superb bit of arcade equipment yours, BUT to enter the competition you'll need to stick your Turtles token onto the entry form in the mag. So, keep them safe, and, who knows, the Turtles might be turning up on YOUR doorstep!



MARGE PRUDE SAYS:

"Cowabunga, dudes! Only total weenies don't dig Turtle power!"

YEAH MARGE, TOO RIGHT

GET DECEMBER'S C+VG AND GET A FREE PACK OF GROOVY TMNT MOVIE CARDS WITH A FREE TURTLES STICKER AND A YUMMY STICK OF TURTLE BUBBLE GUM!

ALL THIS AND A CHANCE TO WIN THE TURTLES COIN-OP TOO! AMAZORAMA!

GET DOWN TO THE NEWSAGENT WITH £1.30 ON NOVEMBER 16TH OR RISK MARGE'S DERISION!

HIGHSCORES

GAME	DATE	SCORE